

# STATE

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October 2012

# MAGAZINE

## Working to Live

HR's Work/Life Division  
Leads Charge for Balance

## Multilateral Mavens

Creating Opportunity  
through Collaboration

## The Gambia

History Drives Economic  
Progress in River Nation



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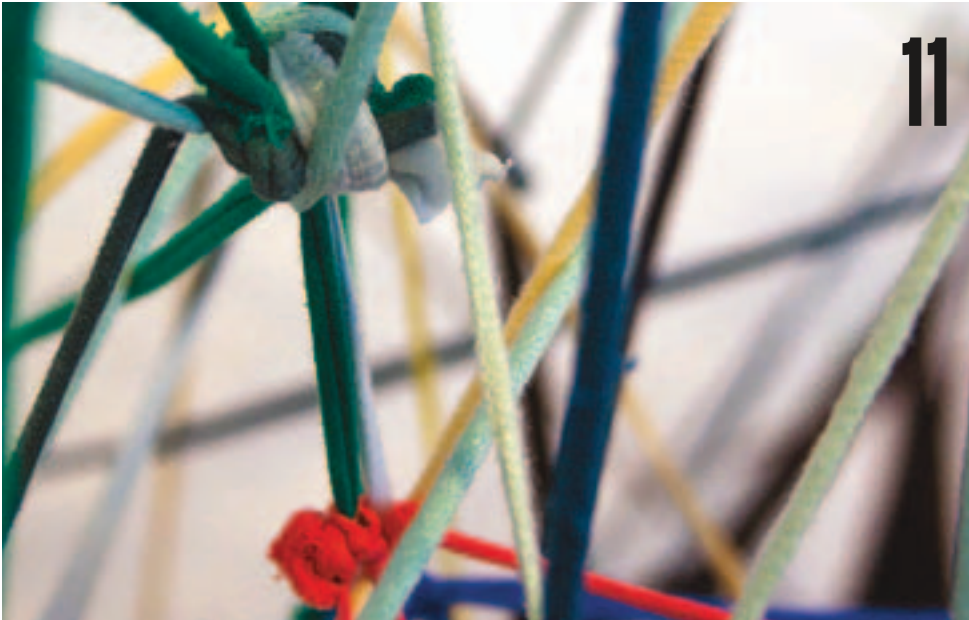
## Such Great Heights

Climbers Celebrate  
Georgian Independence

Sean Walker and other climbers  
(not pictured) reached the nearly  
16,000-foot summit of Mt. Tetnuli.  
*Photos by Jared Kimball*







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## On the Cover

A cashew vendor in Banjul, Gambia, carries her goods to market atop her head.

*Photo by Rachel Welfoot*



# Post One

BY ISAAC D. PACHECO

## All in the Family

The other day, the most amazing thing happened: I became a father. Despite not feeling like I've done anything heroic enough in my life to deserve such an amazing gift, I was blessed with a healthy, 10 lb., 3 oz., boy on the morning of July 29.

My son, Atticus Jackson Pacheco, was born with his dad's nose, his mom's eyes and his grandfather's easygoing temperament. Most importantly, he was born with two parents fortunate enough to be able to devote their full attention to his care, thanks in part to State Department policies that encourage employees to find a healthy balance between work and family life.

Following my son's birth, I was able to take a combination of annual and sick leave to take care of him and support my wife for the better part of a month. While I realize that State Department policy made this priceless opportunity possible, I owe an equal share of thanks to my fantastic editorial team, which handled the complexities of compiling and assembling our monthly publication with aplomb in my absence.

Flexible leave options are just a few of many ways the Department's Work/Life Division (WLD) makes "working to live" possible at one of the government's most demanding agencies. The Bureau of Human Resources program implements Secretary Clinton's mandate that employees be able to balance family and home responsibilities with their work requirements (pg. 15). The tight-knit Office of Employee Relations-based team works tirelessly to ensure that department employees can live the types of rich, fulfilling lives they work so hard to make possible for others around the globe.

In light of the recent tragedy in Libya, the importance of prioritizing families cannot be overstressed. The heartbreaking loss of our four dedicated colleagues in a



senseless act of violence served as a somber reminder of the dangers that Foreign Service officers sometimes face in war-torn regions of the world. As I hold my son in my arms, I can only imagine with deep sadness the loss the families of these men must feel.

Even as we mourn the passing of Ambassador Christopher Stevens, Information Management Specialist Sean Smith and Protective Security Specialists Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods, we celebrate their rich lives and legacies. Despite our sorrow, our resolve to continue our important mission remains as strong as ever.

Department employees have joined together in their condemnation of those who use fear and violence to stifle the voice of the people, and have redoubled their efforts to open doors for freedom. Undaunted by the risks associated with the work sometimes required of them, Department employees continue to work with our international partners to find solutions to complex social, cultural and economic issues.

This magazine is dedicated to these men and women who live at the far end of the work/life balance beam. They put their lives on the line every day to create opportunities for democracy to thrive around the globe and in doing so make the world a better place not just for their families, but for everyone. ■

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Isaac D. Pacheco".

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### Submissions

For details on submitting articles to *State Magazine*, request our guidelines by email at statemagazine@state.gov or download them from state.gov/statemag.

*State Magazine* does not purchase freelance material.

### Deadlines

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The deadline for the January 2013 issue is November 15.

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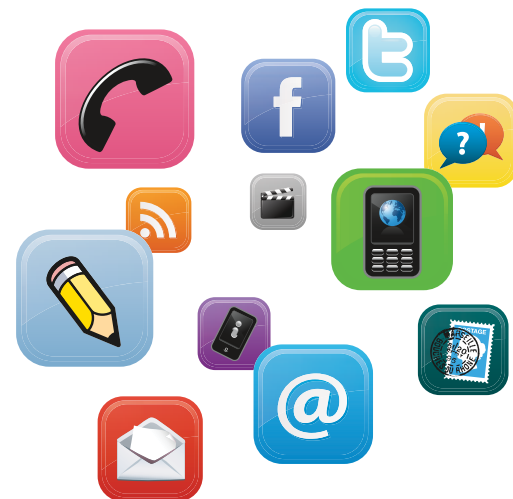
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# Inbox



## Another Solid Issue

I saw the Post of the Month for the July/August issue, and Monrovia looks wonderful. Our Chargé gave a copy to President Sirleaf and she was pleased. I want to thank you for helping us with the article.

**Dehab Ghebreab**  
*Public Affairs Officer  
Monrovia, Liberia*

Thank you for your consistently excellent work. I appreciate your professionalism and thoughtfulness, and look forward to working with you.

**Rick Barton**  
*Assistant Secretary for Conflict  
and Stabilization Operations*



## Women in CORDS

Here is another CORDS footnote ("The CORDS of War," May 2012, and "CORDS Footnote," June 2012). I think

the fact that women FSOs also served is worth recording for history. I volunteered for Vietnam in 1968 and was chief of the Reports Branch at CORDS HQ in II Corps Tactical Zone from September 1968 to March 1970.

**Alison Palmer**  
*Wellfleet, Mass.*



## Hot Tweets

So proud to be featured with the other @PickeringWW Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellows on the pages of @StateMag. <http://goo.gl/2HP32>

**Jake Nelson**  
*@JakeRNelson*

Thanks for all the great RTs this week #FF @NEAarts and @StateMag Here's a Serving Abroad finalist image for friday! <http://pic.twitter.com/CmOHQ14S>

**Art in Embassies**  
*@ArtinEmbassies*



**@StateMag**

Mention @StateMag in your official post or office tweets and get your story out to the world! We'll retweet the most interesting news and feature items to our online followers and include the best Twitter postings in upcoming issues of the *State Magazine*!

# In the News

## Visit Commemorates Fallen WWII Servicemen

The Republic of Palau consists of more than 300 islands, one of which, the island of Peleliu, holds a permanent place in World War II history. The island is the site of the Battle of Peleliu, which holds a special position in the lore and tradition of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Expecting a short engagement there, the U.S. military found itself embroiled in a

lengthy conflict. After a two-month battle against Japanese forces, the Marines suffered significant losses. (The 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, took more than 70 percent casualties, the highest rate of any single battle by any Marine unit in history.)

In August, in honor of these fallen U.S. service personnel, Republic of Palau (ROP) President Johnson Toribiong; ROP

Vice President Kerai Mariur; Department of State Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell; Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Admiral Cecil Haney; U.S. Ambassador to Palau Helen Reed-Rowe; USAID Director to the Philippines and the Pacific Gloria Steele; White House Special Advisor Jeffrey Prescott; and other officials traveled during torrential rains to Peleliu for a commemorative event.

While there, President Toribiong and Admiral Haney placed wreaths at Orange Beach and at the 1st Marine Division Memorials. The delegation visited combat sites including the hard fought "Bloody Nose Ridge," toured the Battle of Peleliu Museum and witnessed the signing of a sister-park agreement with the United States designed to share information and technical expertise to assist with preservation of the historic landmarks.

Reflecting the beginning of a new initiative between the U.S. Embassy in Koror and the Government of Palau seeking return of recovered dog tags and other traceable WWII personal items for return to surviving relatives, Peleliu Governor Kangichi Uchau and three Peleliu citizens presented the U.S. delegation with several U.S. WWII military dog tags that were recently found on the island. The tags were forwarded to the Joint Pacific Accounting Command in Honolulu for research and appropriate action.

To conclude the visit, after a briefing regarding the challenges presented by unexploded ordnance throughout the Pacific, the delegation observed a controlled detonation of recovered WWII artillery, coordinated by the NGO Clear Ground Demining, which assists in identification and removal of potential explosives, trains local specialists and educates the local population on the hazards.



Admiral Cecil Haney salutes the memorial wreath placed at the Peleliu Battlefield.

*Photo by Bouveau Kira Anastacio*





## Secretary Clinton Reopens Consulate General

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in July presided over the reopening of the U.S. Consulate General in Alexandria, Egypt, which had closed in 1993 due to federal budget cuts. The event, hosted by Consul General E. Candace Putnam, was attended by Ambassador Anne Patterson, Acting Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs Beth Jones and local dignitaries.

The U.S. consular relationship with Alexandria dates to 1835, but after 1993 the only U.S. official presence there was an American Cultural Center and then an American Presence Post (APP), the American Center Alexandria. The consulate reopened in the same historic building that had housed the APP.

The consulate general's district includes 23 million Egyptians in a region stretching along the Mediterranean coast from the Libyan border to Port Said and down into the Nile Delta. The consulate general will provide economic, commercial and political partnership opportunities, development assistance through USAID, consular services for approximately 9,000 resident American citizens, cultural and educational programming, as well as military coordination with the Egyptian Navy.

Secretary Clinton speaks at the consulate general's reopening.  
*Photo by Mohamed Nafea*

## Embassy Streamlines Visitor Check-in with iPads

U.S. embassies worldwide find visitor check-in for their 4th of July celebrations often involves lengthy lines of invitees, who must wait to process through security or be escorted to the line where they meet the ambassador.

Until this year's event, the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv's check-in process required eight to 12 workstations with separate guest databases at three street locations in front of the ambassador's residence. Tables, chairs, sun canopies and lighting for after-dark arrivals had to be readied for the more than 2,500 invited guests. After the event, determining the actual count of checked-in guests against those invited required hours of consolidating multiple databases.

This year, though, the former 15- to 30-minute wait at check-in was reduced to seconds, thanks to the use of iPads running the Event Check-in application. The embassy added to the application its list of invited guests,

and then used eight Wi-Fi-equipped iPads running the app at contact points set up near each entrance to the ambassador's residence.

The invitations' covers also included an eye-pleasing QRCode. To check in, guests' QRcodes were scanned. If guests forgot their invitation, they could be manually searched in the database. Event Check-in also sent an automatic text message to a designated cell phone number when a VIP checked in, and personnel wearing Blue-Tooth headsets could hear the text alerts and rush VIPs to the appropriate line.

Protocol Assistant Natalia Svartman used an iPad while at the ambassador's side to quickly identify each guest as he or she was about to meet the ambassador. She said she could ask a guest's name and quickly search the database, using a first or last name or the name of a company or office.

"All the information I needed to make a proper introduction was easily and quickly accessible," and that made the receiving line run smoothly, she said.

Several iPad check-in solutions are on the market, with varying prices and functionalities, for posts seeking a fast and efficient process for mission events.



Members of the Marine Security Guard detachment lead youths from an NGO in abdominal exercises.

*Photo by Jorge Arcanjo*

## Lisbon Staff Hold Youth Fitness Camp

Taking advantage of blue skies and school holidays on Aug. 1 and 2, U.S. Embassy in Lisbon staff, along with the Marine Security Guard detachment and two local NGOs, organized a fitness camp at the embassy for nearly 50 children and volunteers from underprivileged Lisbon-area neighborhoods.

Four Marines directed the activities, in which the youngsters combined exercise with practicing English as the Marines practiced Portuguese. After stretching and abdominal workouts, the Marines guided the kids through part of their fitness course, with some team building exercises added on. Later, some of the children, volunteers, Marines and members of the public affairs section played soccer and basketball on mixed teams, while other youths worked in the embassy's gardens. Each day's activities closed with an outdoor lunch of healthy food in the shade of the embassy's cobblestone-lined courtyard.

In a nation where childhood obesity is on the rise, the activities allowed embassy staff to promote healthy eating and activity, and gave embassy staff an opportunity to engage with minority youth from Lisbon suburbs, a key outreach target.

## Agents Cited for Heroism During Kabul Siege

Then-Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker presented State Department Awards for Heroism to Regional Security Office Afghanistan staff at U.S. Embassy Kabul on July 15.

A group Award for Heroism went to DS special agents, security protective specialists, security engineering officers and Civil Service personnel who came to the aid of embassy staff and visitors while under heavy fire during the insurgent attack on the U.S. Embassy compound and two other locations in Kabul on Sept. 13, 2011.

From a nearby vacant building, insurgents attacked the embassy compound with rocket-propelled grenades, a recoilless rifle and small arm fire. Two other attacks were launched in other areas of Kabul.

The assault lasted 20 hours. At least 10 Afghan citizens in the surrounding neighborhood lost their lives, while five people at the embassy were wounded as the facilities sustained significant damage during the barrage. This was the deadliest attack against Embassy Kabul since its opening in 2002.

Recipients of the group award who attended the ceremony were Security Engineering Officer Ralph Gaspard; Security Protective Specialists Justin Crewse, Raymond Hendrix, Michael B. Porter, Benjamin Vasquez and Dean Wright; Assistant Regional Security Officers Kevin Wynes, Reggie Murdock, Courtney Glass, Kenneth Haynes, Leonard Danquah and Jonathan Toler; and Deputy RSOs Ronnie Catipon and Joe Bopp.

Some of those honored have departed Kabul, were on leave or were away on a mission: Security Program Manager William B. Hodge; Security Protective Specialists Marvin Evans, Leonard L. Lawrence, William S. Rial IV, Herbert L. Moldenhauer, Tin T. Nguyen, Jason L. Smith, Randall B. Taylor and Jeffrey T. Williams; Special Agents Justin F. O'Friel, Jeff J. Jacob, Guido P. Muys, Dwight A. Pierce, Kory

M. Hammond, Anthony J. McGinley, Daniel Vargas, Evan Tsurumi, Margalit T. Murray-Rosanoff, Lewis P. Scott, Michael R. Conklin, Lee M. Rommel, Kitt D. Christopherson and Joseph M. Lestorti; and Supervisory Special Agents Robert W. Weitzel, James Hine, Lon C. Fairchild, Jorge A. Espinoza and Vance R. Witmer.

Ambassador Crocker, who was nearing the end of his tour at Embassy Kabul, praised RSO staff for their service and dedication, and thanked them for their successful efforts to keep the embassy secure under such extraordinary and challenging conditions.



Ambassador Crocker, at center in rear, joins several of the heroism award winners.  
*Department of State photo*



## New Distance-Learning Course Offered

### PP430: Preparing for an International Organization Meeting

Those asked to represent the U.S. government at a meeting can take, in about an hour and a half, the new Distance Learning course, PP430: Preparing for an International Organization Meeting, which outlines steps to cover and focuses on pre-meeting research and policy coordination, accreditation, post-meeting finishing touches and developing support materials. The course, which promotes a more effective multilateral workforce, supplements course PP211: Multilateral Diplomacy, which offers more in-depth preparation. Apply online for PP430 at: <http://fsi.state.gov/admin/reg/default.asp?EventID=PP430&filterlocation>

Employees will have 90 days from receipt of a course log-on to complete the course work. For additional information, contact the Political Training Division at (703) 302-7184.

### PP211: Multilateral Diplomacy

Using exercises, simulations and examples, this three-day classroom course prepares participants for work with international organizations or for serving as a U.S. delegate to a multilateral meeting. It includes a hands-on workshop on key aspects of conference diplomacy and provides tips for preparing to serve in an interagency delegation and for drafting text. Students hear presentations on the U.N. system and participate in a simulation of an international meeting. Apply online at: <http://fsi.state.gov/admin/reg/default.asp?EventID=PP211>

### FasTrac Distance Learning Program

Learn at Your Own Pace, When and Where You Want! Available to most Department employees in a constant paid status for at least one year, and to eligible family members, FasTrac is based on a password that provides access to a catalog of more than 2,700 courses. The catalog is at <http://fsi.state.gov/fastrac>, and more

information on all FSI Distance Learning opportunities can be found at <http://fsi.state.gov> by clicking on "Distance Learning."

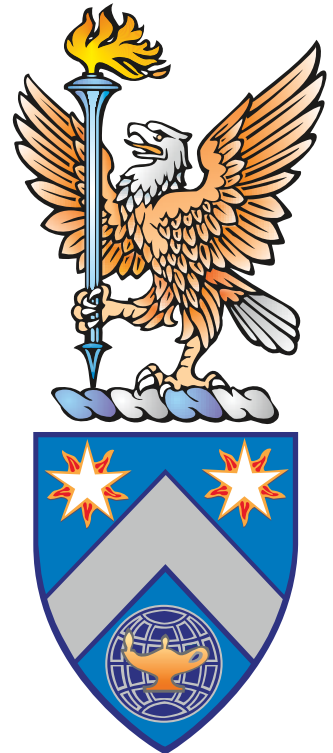
### Student Records Online

Located on the FSI Web Page, Student Records Online is a secure, password-protected site that provides access to all FSI training information. Features include:

- Reviewing and printing your training schedule
- Reviewing and printing your Student Transcript
- Tracking the status of your training request
- Canceling an already-scheduled FSI course
- Requesting changes or canceling an External Training registration
- Creating and submitting your Individual Development Plan (IDP)/Work and Development Plan for Locally Employed Staff (WDP)

For more information and to establish a logon, visit <https://fsic-sapps.fsi.state.gov/fsirecs/Login.aspx>

Information on FSI courses is at the FSI Schedule of Courses on the OpenNet at <http://fsi.state.gov>. See Department Notices for announcements of new courses and new course dates and announcements of external training opportunities. For additional information, contact the Office of the Registrar at (703) 302-7144/7137.



## Children's Soccer Clinic Boosts Cultural Exchange

Twenty Vietnamese and American children gathered at U.S. Consulate Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) early on a Saturday morning as Tiest Sondaal, a former U.S. professional soccer player and member of the consulate community, held the post's inaugural Tiger Tots Soccer Clinic.

Soccer is Vietnam's most popular sport, and the clinic was well attended, especially because the annual U.S. Embassy Hanoi-Consulate HCMC soccer championship was in the offing. HCMC officers and Locally Employed Staff cheered as their children learned soccer fundamentals from members of the HCMC "Tiger" soccer team.

The children and parents also gained a stronger sense of community. As families chatted after the last scrimmage, munching on bananas and rambutan, the event's community value was readily apparent from the children's pleas to return the following week. ■



Vietnamese and American participants run drills at the Tiger Tots Soccer Clinic.  
*Photo by Nicole Fox*



"All over the world, every day, America's diplomats and development experts risk their lives in the service of our country and our values, because they believe that the United States must be a force for peace and progress in the world, that these aspirations are worth striving and sacrificing for. Alongside our men and women in uniform, they represent the best traditions of a bold and generous nation."

*-Secretary Hillary Clinton*

Read the secretary's entire remarks on the Benghazi attacks at  
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2012/09/197654.htm>



Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



# Direct from the D.G.

BY LINDA THOMAS-GREENFIELD  
DIRECTOR GENERAL

## Addressing Work-Life, Family and Disability Employment Needs

October is National Work and Family Month, and National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Both events give us good reason to reflect on how to make the Department of State an even better place to work. Hiring more people with disabilities and providing employees with options to manage their professional and personal responsibilities are high priorities for the current Administration and for HR. Our success will help us continue to attract and keep one of the most competitive and motivated workforces in the federal government. It's important that ALL employees be aware of the tools available for work/life balance and wellness, which provide reasonable accommodations for employees who need them.

Two years ago, President Obama required all federal agencies to establish annual hiring goals for people with disabilities. In fiscal year 2011, the Department exceeded its hiring goal, and we are well on our way toward exceeding our goal again this year.

I encourage hiring managers to make good use of our Schedule A hiring authority—a streamlined way to hire qualified Civil Service employees with disabilities. Please reach out to the Department's Selective Placement Program Coordinator in the Office of Employee Relations' Disabilities and Reasonable Accommodations Division (HR/ER/DRAD) at [SelectivePlacement@state.gov](mailto:SelectivePlacement@state.gov) for information on this successful program. I am confident that, as more hiring managers and employees become aware of the Schedule A hiring authority and the resources available in DRAD, we will continue to be successful in promoting the Department as a model employer and in recruiting, hiring and retaining persons with disabilities.

Work-life flexibility issues are increasingly important to our employees, and I expect all supervisors to become familiar with the wide range of workplace flexibilities available. At the same time, I encourage each employee to explore the many programs the Department has established to help meet his or her goals for work-life balance and wellness. This may involve a flexible work arrangement, such as alternative work schedules, telework, job-sharing or part-time work schedules. It may involve using IQ: Information Quest, a no-cost referral service to find child

care, geriatric care, financial planning and other services. Or it may involve joining one of the noontime "office yoga" sessions run by the Office of Medical Services.

I want to emphasize that creating a balance between your professional and personal goals is always going to be a challenge, whether you are a Civil Service, Foreign Service or Locally Employed Staff employee. The Department has resources to help, but ultimately, decisions about how to create balance and wellness rest with each of us.

Diversity is one of my key priorities as D.G., and that means diversity in the broadest sense of the word. To succeed and innovate, to meet the requirements of our global role, we need to be an attractive employer for single people, couples, people with young children at home and people with elder care issues. We need employees from every region of our country and every ethnic background. And we need to provide a welcoming and supportive workplace for those with disabilities.

The Department ranks high on many lists of "good" U.S. government agencies to work for. I am dedicated to making sure we keep that reputation and to making us even more attractive to people of all backgrounds and all walks of life.

You can learn about the Department's work-life programs and resources by visiting <http://intranet.hr.state.sbu/EmployeeRelations/WorkLifeDivision/Pages/default.aspx>.

If you have ideas about how we can further improve our work-life environment, please share them with me via unclassified email at [dgdirect@state.gov](mailto:dgdirect@state.gov). I look forward to hearing from you. ■



*Linda Thomas-Greenfield*

# Diversity Notes

BY JOHN M. ROBINSON  
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

## What to Wear: Diversity and Fashion at State

Why are we discussing how to dress in Diversity Notes? It is almost time for magazines to run their fall fashion previews, and it is always time to talk dress code as a matter of civil rights and personal success strategy. Employees have the right to express some individuality in clothing, dress appropriately for our business culture, dress in a manner that protects them from excessive heat or cold, and to be free from teasing and taunts because of their fashion choices. You also have the responsibility not to disrupt the workplace with distracting or overly revealing clothing and to avoid embarrassing the Department or detracting from its mission with your fashion choices.

*The Department of State Guidelines on Appropriate Dress* posted in July state that “Employees who do not have special dress requirements should use common sense in determining what is appropriate for their particular situation at work.” So the rules are brief and somewhat vague, and basically state that you should be thoughtful and wise in dress. But remember that every workplace has written and unwritten rules. Here are a few:

**Rule #1: You have the right to express yourself, but you do not have the right to cause other employees and your managers discomfort.**

Some managers may be uncomfortable or avoid approaching a staff member about the appropriateness of his or her apparel. Please, draw the line before your superiors draw one for you.

**Rule #2: Every fad is not for everyone.**

Even when guidelines are clear, it is difficult to foresee how the dress code may be interpreted in the context of changing fads and styles. Be mindful of where you are and the context for which you are dressing.

**Rule #3: Follow the business culture to the best of your ability.**

While appropriateness is socially and culturally subjective, there are some lines that should not be crossed in a professional setting. If formal suits are the standard in your office and you decide to wear a golf shirt, you should evaluate your decision-making process. Likewise, if your Friday work attire and recreational Friday nightwear happens, to be one and the same, make sure your recreational attire is work appropriate.



The purpose of a dress code is to reflect the values of a workplace; however, there are exceptions. For example, some individuals may be sensitive to light, temperature or other environmental factors. Many religious traditions have dress codes. If an office dress code conflicts with your needs related to a disability or religious requirement, speak with your manager about a reasonable accommodation.

There are clothes for all seasons that allow you to dress for success. Nothing, even the weather, should prevent you from presenting your best self. So, before you set out for your work day at the Department, consider the following:

- Does my outfit project competence and professionalism?
- Will the clothes I wear today convey respect for colleagues, customers and the work environment?
- Is my attire a safety hazard or a distraction?
- Is my outfit neat and business like, or will it prompt my supervisor to speak with me about professional dress?
- Is my personal expression sacrificing the professional image essential to the performance of the Department's mission?

You have an obligation to yourself to be comfortable at work. You also have the obligation to protect your professional image. It is up to you to find the right balance. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Robinson".



# Exchange Brings Artist to Botswana

By Tiffany Williams, intern, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

After her sculpture was selected for exhibition at the residence of U.S. Ambassador to Botswana Michelle Gavin, Victoria “Tori” Greising came to Botswana in February for a workshop with local artists and to complete the installation. She thus became one of more than 100 artists involved in overseas cultural exchanges on behalf of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations’ Office of Art in Embassies (AIE).

“I was thrilled to be asked to participate,” she said.

At the four-day workshop at Gaborone’s Thapong Art Center facilitated by AIE and embassy Public Affairs Officer John Warner, Greising taught the technique she employs in her ephemeral installations to 40 of the nation’s most renowned artists, designers and collectors, many of them teachers, and some of whom traveled from the distant north of the country. The workshop involved a melding of the minds, she said, and was the first time many of participants encountered fabric as a sculptural medium or the concept of impermanent art.

Greising said the lexicon of contemporary art, her milieu while pursuing a master’s degree in fine arts (MFA) at American University in Washington, D.C., had no equivalent in Gaborone. “Most people,” she said, “were not satisfied when I said my work is rooted in a dialogue about deconstruction and reconstruction of a universal material, with concepts focused on temporality and formal decisions.”

Instead, she said, the core principles of her work, such as color and line, became the bridge between her and workshop participants.

Her installation, a web of fabric, is also a commentary on the connectedness and similarities of all people. “Everyone in the world interacts with fabric,” she said. “Therefore, this material activates many dialogues across geographical, cultural and socioeconomic boundaries.”

Workshop participants collected old clothing scraps and purchased fabric from a local retailer. The variety of textures and colors allowed the artists to explore the medium as thoroughly as an artist would use paint.

What evolved from the collaboration of an American with an MFA and artists whose work is rooted in African practical artistic creativity was art in which two different approaches literally intertwined to create a twist on Greising’s original idea for her fabric sculptures. The participants created abstract artworks, incorporating a theme that would influence Greising’s installation at the residence.

At the workshop’s end, seven participants helped Greising install her piece at the residence, and Greising used what she learned during the week to influence the installation.

“As with any installation, there is a certain amount of pre-planning that has to happen, but the majority of the work happens on-site,” she said.

Influenced by the creations of workshop participants and Gaborone’s cultural environment, Greising’s installation evokes the presence of a tree.

“I wanted to create something slightly reminiscent of the shade trees that are so beneficial during the hot months in the city,” she said. “I was there at the end of January and noticed that during the afternoon, most people can be found having tea under the shade of a tree. Activity stops and rest takes over.”

Like a tree, her installation casts shadows, which she sees “as one of the most important ways my installations interact with the space.”

Greising’s trip culminated in an opening reception for the exhibition hosted by Ambassador Gavin for approximately 100 people from across the city, including Americans, politicians, leaders of nonprofit groups and other local residents. She also gave radio and television interviews.

Looking back on the highlights of her experience, Greising recalled how, after the installation was complete, workshop participant Philip Segola, one of Botswana’s most renowned artists, wedged himself between the piece and the wall, and commented, “Now look at this: Magnificent!” She said this was the moment she “really felt as though my art and practice were communicating outside of me.”

Aboard her flight out of the country, she opened the in-flight magazine and found a three-page spread on Segola’s most recent retrospective.

Since her visit, University of Botswana art students have done their own installation, which still stands, according to PAO Warner.

Ambassador Gavin said the installation at her residence is tremendously popular with guests. Through Greising’s visit, she continued, AIE “made it possible for us to reach a creative community that we had not necessarily worked with before and gave us a new and engaging way to expand our dialogues with the people of Botswana on two of our top priorities—engaging with Botswana’s youth and supporting entrepreneurship and innovation.”

She said such programs continue to demonstrate effective ways the United States can use art to connect with foreign audiences in deep and relevant ways. ■



At the exhibition’s opening reception, Greising meets Ambassador Gavin, right, in front of her installation.

OBO photo



Michelle Los Banos-Jardina, a public affairs officer from the U.S. Mission to the UN-Rome, meets with Bangladeshi citizens while promoting multilateral efforts at addressing food security issues.  
Photo by UN World Food Programme

# Creating New Opportunities

## IO Helps FSOs Prepare for Multilateral Work

By Nick Sadoski, foreign affairs officer, Bureau of International Organization Affairs

It's October, and for New Yorkers that means reclaiming their city from the annual September whirlwind opening of the United Nations General Assembly and the frenetic weeks of multilateral diplomacy that follow. Those weeks are now just one feature of the rapidly expanding and evolving multilateral universe. Today, it's the rare issue that does not have a multilateral component. From promoting sustainable development to addressing climate change, human rights or nonproliferation, Department officials work in a multilateral landscape. The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) emphasizes that the United States must integrate its bilateral, regional and multilateral diplomacy.

"I've witnessed the growing importance of multilateral diplomacy throughout my

career," said Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Donald Booth. A former Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO) office director, Booth emphasized what he called "the importance of understanding how multilateral relationships can affect our bilateral agenda." He said he encourages his officers "to understand the dynamics in regional and multilateral organizations so that our bilateral engagement can better support U.S. interests pursued in multilateral organizations."

"There is no longer such a thing as a purely bilateral relationship," he said.

The IO is creating new opportunities beyond traditional IO missions, and is developing and promoting a multilateral toolkit to prepare officials for multilateral work. For instance, IO recently established

a multilateral officer position based out of Mission Addis Ababa.

"Having an officer dedicated to working with both the United Nations and the African Union to improve the international community's response to crises on the African continent has been invaluable," said Ambassador to the African Union (AU) Michael Battle. Battle, U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, said this position "ensures we are actively involved in supporting a regional organization that has far-reaching effects that extend well beyond our bilateral relationships in Africa. Events and debates at the AU can affect the work of our colleagues at the Security Council in New York, a range of our bilateral missions across Africa, as well as numerous other federal agencies."





**Above:** During a recent tour of food security and development projects in Honduras, then-USUN Rome Ambassador Ertharin Cousin helped plant seeds given to her by a local farmer. By visiting the projects together, USAID, USDA and Honduran government representatives saw how bilateral cooperation with the multilateral agencies could assist the nation's poor. *Photo by Michelle Los Banos-Jardina* **Left:** Assistant Secretary Brimmer meets with members of the Indian military while leading a delegation to the U.S.-India Joint Peacekeeping Working Group in 2011. *Department of State photo*



IO has made the creation of such multilateral positions a priority, and is using the AU officer model as an example of opportunities for increased collaboration across the traditional diplomatic lines.

"At the end of the day, our collective success in confronting global challenges will require a Foreign and Civil Service with a broader range of engagement skills, including the ability to interact with and understand multilateral bodies," said Director General Linda Thomas-Greenfield.

Thomas-Greenfield also said she encourages promotion panels to recognize this critical skill set.

"These skills need to be recognized and assessed as part of the career development of tomorrow's diplomats. I'm pleased to note that we are moving in that direction, with the development of multilateral precepts for the purposes of evaluation and promotion."

To facilitate the development of these skills, IO is developing new and expanded training resources, facilitating multilateral rotational opportunities for both Foreign Service and Civil Service per-

sonnel and highlighting the importance of multilateral engagement through the creation of a Department-wide award for excellence in multilateral diplomacy.

"We responded to the Secretary's recommendations in the QDDR by looking at how we conducted our multilateral affairs, and are developing new solutions to increase our engagement," said Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs Esther Brimmer. She said IO has:

- Sought to develop and promote the multilateral "specialty" so that diplomats are prepared to work across traditional lines throughout their careers.
- Stood up the Office of Policy and Regional and Functional Organizations to provide strategic-level multilateral analysis and recommendations, and recognize the growing importance of regional and subregional organizations.
- Expanded its FSI-based multilateral training course to include online distance learning programs for colleagues in the field.
- Increased opportunities for those outside of IO assignments to experience high-level multilateral diplomacy in IO missions.

"Our people in the field—be it an IO mission in Montreal or a bilateral mission elsewhere—must have the tools they need to promote U.S. interests in the multilateral arena," Brimmer said. "While the work isn't done yet, we've made great strides, and will continue to do so, as the importance of multilateral engagement will only increase throughout the U.S. foreign policy community for decades to come." ■

# Finding the Right Balance

## HR helps employees handle work, home life

By Elizabeth Royal, Bureau of Human Resources' Work/Life Division

Senate Resolution 210 designates October as National Work and Family Month, reflecting the need for employees to balance work with family and personal responsibilities. The State Department has many programs to help employees do this. The Bureau of Human Resources' Work/Life Division (WLD) links the Department's human resource specialists, managers and employees on work/life issues; administers and develops leave and travel policies; and supports programs on health and life insurance benefits, Workers' Compensation, childcare, transit subsidies and student loan repayment. WLD events that bring the Department community together include a summer food drive, Take Your Child to Work Day and the Department's Combined Federal Campaign. WLD is the Department's child care liaison, promotes flexible workplace programs and offers informational programs through IQ: Information Quest.

IQ: Information Quest is a Web- and telephone-based resource and referral service for Department employees. Specialists at LifeCare, the program's service provider, are available 24 hours daily with personalized information on child or elder care, personal health/wellness, legal matters, financial counseling referrals and educational materials. Employees searching for regular or backup child care or elder care or other assistance should visit the IQ Web page for more details.

WLD's mission has been bolstered by a new employee group called Balancing Act at State. Established in early 2011, the group seeks to promote Department policies that allow for better work-life balance. Approved as an official employee organization in March, Balancing Act at State has more than 170 members, representing Foreign Service and Civil Service employees from entry-level to management.







**Above:** Office of Academic Exchange Programs Public Affairs Officer Jamie Lawrence shares a photo of his new daughter, Perry Lawrence. **Right:** Brenda Wells, who teleworks once per week, awaits the bus that'll take her home from work on a trip so long it won a local radio station's \$1,000 prize for the lengthiest D.C.-area commute.

*Photos by Ed Warner*

Balancing Act at State provides a venue for employees to discuss work-life issues, pursues top-down and bottom-up advocacy, consults with WLD and engages senior leadership on creating a more flexible and employee-friendly work environment. A recent survey showed members' primary interests are flexible work schedules, child care and telework. The group believes the Department could improve its 7th-place rank in the 2011 survey on Best Places to Work in the Federal Government (out of 33 federal entities) by improving its family-friendly culture and support of work/life balance.

One of the employees who has benefited from the Department's work-life policies is Jamie A. Lawrence, a new father and 10-year Department veteran, who took several weeks of sick leave and several days of annual leave when his daughter was born. He said he was thankful for colleagues "who could step up and fill in during my absence" and for supervisors in the Office of Academic Programs who "understand the value of work-life balance and encouraged me to take as much time as my family and I needed."

Lawrence's daughter was born a month early, so he and his wife were caught a bit off guard on planning, and his wife needed his



help with post-delivery recuperation. Having the time away from work helped with that, he said, adding that it "was also amazing to be able to spend so many days and nights with my daughter without the stress of a hectic workplace environment hanging over my head."

Lawrence said he felt "fortunate to be able to take so much time off and still have a pay check coming in," and that his experience is something he hopes will continue to be accepted in his office and the Department.

He said another new father in his office also took a significant amount of leave after the birth of his daughter, "and I think others have now seen what is possible."

Regarding the Department's other work-life mainstay, telework, Brenda Wells, a Diplomatic Security assignments officer in the Bureau of Human Resources, said teleworking one day per week has been invaluable in alleviating the stress of her daily five-hour roundtrip commute from Baltimore to Main State.

Wells said her HR office strongly supports telework and, since she has three young children, "I knew that there would have to be flexibility at both ends for me to be successful and happy at both my job and at home." The benefits have been "flexibility and peace of mind" and "additional time and energy saved from not having to commute, [which] is recycled back into my work." This makes her more productive and focused while teleworking and able to spend quality time with her children at the day's end, she said.

She feels lucky to have a job that can be done remotely. "I value and respect the concept by ensuring that I do the best job possible," she said. WLD believes the key to success in achieving work-life balance are

managers who can bridge the gap between policy and practice, and are trained to implement flexibility. Ideally, supervisors should:

- Know about the range of flexibility options available and how to manage them.
- Develop the skills to lead a team that has different working arrangements.
- Become role models by using flexible work arrangements.
- Continuously evaluate based on employee outcomes.
- Seek ways to improve.

October is a good month to renew efforts to improve work-life balance and to keep or better the Department's ranking as a best place to work. ■



# Leadership Exchange

## ECA Gives U.K. Leaders Inside Look at U.S. Politics

By Nathan Arnold, communications officer, and Lauren Darwit, communications intern,  
Office of International Visitors, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

In a briefing on federalism, Professor Jeremy Mayer said U.S. states often have more power than the federal government. His audience, all members of Parliament (MPs), the top legislative body in the United Kingdom, peppered him instead with questions about the U.S. justice and health care systems.

And so began the 2012 British American Parliamentary Group (BAPG) exchange sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs that this year brought six MPs to the United States in late July.

Now in its 35th year, the 10-day BAPG exchange is an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) effort to acquaint participants with the American political system at all levels, especially focusing on the U.S. Congress. Even though the exchange occurred during the London Olympics, the MPs never questioned participating; one even gave his Olympics tickets away.

As with most IVLP projects, the participants' first stop was Washington, D.C. They visited the Meridian International Center, U.S. Capitol, U.K. Embassy, Department of Defense, Congressional Budget Office and Government Accountability Office. At the visit's end, they went to Boston for a state-level perspective on government, something mostly foreign to them.

In Washington at a congressional reception hosted by Rep. John Campbell, MP Guto Bebb exclaimed that he was "taken by D.C." At the Capitol, they watched votes on the House floor from the gallery and were paired with members of Congress, whom they met in their Capitol Hill offices and later shadowed over a weekend in their home districts.

Nadhim Zahawi, MP for Stratford-on-Avon, was matched with former Ronald Reagan speechwriter Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, and attended a fundraiser luncheon with community activists. Rohrabacher, who himself participated in a Department-sponsored exchange to the former Soviet Union, said exchanges "foster long-term cooperation and bring down the shields of hostile countries." The exchanges also help participants build important networks.

He recalled how, during his exchange, he showed a jar of peanut butter to a group of Russians who'd never seen the concoction and didn't believe the jar's barcode could be scanned at a store. They all had a laugh over that, and the experience helped build understanding between the two groups, he said.

Meanwhile, MP Bebb, who represents Aberconwy, shadowed Rep. Charlie Dent, who was campaigning door to door in Kutztown, Pa. That gave Bebb the opportunity to speak with ordinary Americans, including one of Welsh descent who spoke some Welsh and funds several scholarships at Bangor University in North Wales.

"I thanked him for his generosity and felt quite amazed that we live in such a small world," Bebb said.



MP Luciana Berger, left, chats with host Rep. Betty McCollum before they depart for Saint Paul, Minn., for the weekend. McCollum said these exchanges help participants find commonalities in their different systems of government.

*Photo by Nathan Arnold*



British American Parliamentary Group (BAPG) participants get a bird's-eye view of Washington, D.C., from the roof of the city's Meridian International Center. From the left are MP Luciana Berger, MP Julian Smith, MP John Healey, MP Lilian Greenwood, MP Nadhim Zahawi and MP Guto Bebb.

*Photo by Nathan Arnold*

MP John Healey said, "My favorite part was politician-to-politician, spending the weekend in North Carolina with Representative [Brad] Miller."

Miller spoke highly of the BAPG program, in which he has participated several times. He also spoke knowingly of the differences in the U.S. and British political systems, and praised the relationships the program has built. For example, while on a trip to the U.K., his previous hospitality to a former BAPG participant was reciprocated with a special tour of Parliament and a dinner invitation. He said the world is safer and more secure because of programs like the IVLP, which helps build mutual understanding.

In Minnesota, Luciana Berger, MP for Liverpool Wavertree, shadowed Rep. Betty McCollum, riding with her in a parade and sporting a "Vote Betty" T-shirt. She said she liked how McCollum runs town hall meetings (one occurred during the exchange), and she shared ideas with McCollum's staff about making the most of social media.

For her part, McCollum said she "always finds it fascinating to meet with another parliamentarian. These exchanges allow us to find common ground and learn from each other about politics, policy and a different system of government."

The MPs' list of discoveries and new understandings grew during their visit. For instance,

MP Healey explored how the U.S. government promotes housing through such means as the Affordable Housing Tax Credit, which he would like to advocate for in the U.K.

"It was clear, from almost everyone I met, that the U.S.-U.K. relationship is appreciated, and that the shared history and links of so many Americans ensure a very strong bond and high levels of trust toward the U.K.," said Julian Smith, MP for Skipton and Ripon.

MP Healey said the experience pointed out more similarities than differences: "Talking about the strong U.S.-U.K. relationship is easy, but being in the U.S., you see it and feel it," he said.

MP Lilian Greenwood, who represents Nottingham South and shadowed Rep. Keith Ellison of Minnesota, concurred that cooperation between our two nations is vital. "Both of our countries are in times of great austerity, and what our countries do matters. There have to be agreements on both sides of the pond."

The MPs bring the total of BAPG alumni to 275 and are among more than 5,200 IVLP participants who will visit the United States in 2012. While some are elected officials, most are not. In fact, U.S. embassies can nominate just about anyone who is an emerging leader for these 10-day or three-week visits, which focus on topics ranging from health to food security to museum management. ■



Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, right, explains his office's memorabilia to MP Nadhim Zahawi.

*Photo by Nathan Arnold*



A full-page photograph of three hikers ascending a grassy mountain trail. The hiker on the left wears a red cap and sunglasses. The middle hiker wears a blue cap and red shorts. The hiker on the right wears a blue jacket and black pants. All three are carrying large backpacks and using trekking poles. The background features a vast, green mountain valley with a winding river and distant, rugged, snow-dusted peaks under a cloudy sky. The image is framed by a red vertical bar on the left and a blue vertical bar on the right.

# Such Great Heights



# Climb Celebrates Georgian Independence

By Maia Lyons, political officer,  
U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi, Georgia

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of U.S.-Georgia relations, seven U.S. and Georgian climbers came together to summit Georgia's snow-covered Mt. Tetnuldi, which rises 15,918 feet above sea level in the Caucasus range.

Far more than a symbolic gesture, the climb required the U.S. and Georgian climbers literally to rely on each other for their lives. Tethered together, the seven-man team knew a fall could be disastrous for all.

were the highlight for the summit team and the 30 U.S. and Georgian diplomats who made the seven-hour trek to remote Svaneti, where the climb began. Once known for frontier lawlessness, the Svaneti region is now becoming an eco-tourist destination. This transition that symbolizes Georgia's progress since independence.

Summiting Tetnuldi provided a powerful image of U.S.-Georgian partnership, but Walker, Rakviashvili and Kimball, all experienced mountaineers, were also aware of potential risks. The 17-hour trip from their camp to the summit and back required crossing glacial crevasses, climbing frozen-over rock faces and, at times, finding their way in pitch darkness.

Tetnuldi is more difficult to climb than some of its taller neighboring peaks, and proved "a rollercoaster of emotion" involving some pain, Walker said.

While the climbers were making their way up Tetnuldi, 30 American and Georgian diplomats led by Deputy Chief of Mission Bridget Brink and Deputy Foreign Minister Sergi Kapanadze traveled to Svaneti to celebrate 20 years of diplomatic relations. After some cultural activities, they hiked toward the base camp on Tetnuldi to meet the descending climbers and celebrate their achievement. That evening, at a Georgian "supra" feast to celebrate the climbers' success, participants reflected on their time on the mountain and the challenges faced.

The bonds they formed would have been unimaginable 20 years earlier, but on this trip, they marked the changes since the Soviet Union dissolved with joint activities reflecting shared values. Wearing identical 20th-anniversary-logo T-shirts and lapel pins, they posed for a group photo with the banner carried to the top of Tetnuldi. The banner's design was created by a girl from the Georgian town that was both the birthplace of Josef Stalin and the community most harmed by the 2008 war with Russia.

"It's amazing what 20 years of diplomatic relations will do," Walker said. "We were sworn enemies, and now we are friends and partners...So much can change." ■



**Left:** The seven-man team shows its enthusiasm after summiting Tetnuldi, in the background.

**Below:** Sean Walker contemplates the view from the climbers' Camp 2 at 12,500 feet. *Photos by Jared Kimball* **Opposite page:** Jared Kimball, Sean Walker and David Rakviashvili reach the lowlands at the end of their trek. *Photo by Maia Lyons*

Regional Legal Advisor Jared Kimball recalled being thankful for the clouds and snow that partially obscured the view of the 4,000-foot vertical drops on either side of the narrow ridge they followed to the summit. "Sometimes it is better to not look down, and just put one foot in front of the other," he said.

Kimball and Security Engineering Officer Sean Walker, another member of the team, learned to climb almost 20 years ago in the mountains of Utah and Washington State. A year before the climb, Kimball and fellow climber and Georgian diplomat David Rakviashvili, Georgia's deputy chief of mission in Washington, D.C., came up with the idea of a joint U.S.-Georgia expedition to mark the 20 years of bilateral diplomatic relations the United States and Georgia celebrated this year.

While Embassy Tbilisi held a number of events to mark the anniversary, the Tetnuldi climb and accompanying cultural activities







Traditional Gambian pirogues off-load their cargo near the Banjul Ferry Terminal.  
*Photo by Diego Hernandez*







# BANJUL

History Is Economic Boon for The Gambia

*By Lovette Singleton, community liaison officer, U.S. Embassy Banjul*





Fondly known as the “smiling coast of Africa” for its shape, The Gambia is the smallest country in mainland Africa, roughly twice the size of Delaware and averaging only 20 miles wide. The Gambia is an enclave bordered on three sides by Senegal and on the West Coast by the Atlantic Ocean. The Gambia River divides the country into two regions, the north bank and south bank. The river originates in Senegal and flows through The Gambia to the Atlantic Ocean.

The Wolof, Malinke and Fulani peoples settled in what is now The Gambia as early as the 13th century, when the Kouroukan Fouga, the constitution of the Mali Empire, was the law of the land. Later, the area was subjected to Moroccan and Portuguese invasions. By the end of the 16th century, as foreign incursions continued, the empire collapsed, and the Gambia River basin was conquered and claimed by the Portuguese. During the 17th century, English merchants settled there, and slavery was a main source of revenue. An estimated three million people were taken from the region as slaves during three centuries of the transatlantic slave trade. Ironically, this dark past is one of the country’s main attractions for tourists.

In 1807, slave trading was abolished throughout the British Empire. The British tried unsuccessfully to end the slave trade in The Gambia, ultimately establishing the military post of Bathurst (now Banjul) in 1816 to stop slave ships from using the Gambia River to access the Atlantic Ocean. The Gambia became a British crown colony in 1843 and an independent nation within the Commonwealth of Nations in 1965. Full independence was approved in a 1970 referendum, and The Gambia proclaimed itself a republic.

### Roots Connection

Tourism in the Gambia has been boosted by Alex Haley’s family saga *Roots*. The Pulitzer Prize-winning novel’s protagonist, Kunta Kinteh, was from the small Gambian town of Juffureh. Haley’s research identified a slave ship, the Lord Ligonier, which sailed from the Gambia River on July 5, 1767, with 140 captured Gambians. It arrived in Annapolis, Md., on September 29 with only 98 survivors. Haley believed one of those survivors was 17-year-old Kunta Kinteh. Tourists make pilgrimages to Juffureh during the biennial International Roots Festival. The famous James Island, recently renamed Kunta Kinteh Island, is a few miles across the river from Juffureh and was a staging point for captured slaves before their voyage to the New World. The island became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2003.

The busy season for tourism extends from November until April. The tourism industry, with more than 100,000 visitors a year, has surpassed the export of groundnuts (peanuts) as the country’s biggest foreign exchange earner, accounting for some 16 percent of the gross domestic product. With street crime a rare occurrence, The Gambia is one of the safest countries in west Africa—another boon to tourism.

### Beacon of Tolerance

The Gambia is a fast-developing nation, with some of the highest percentages of child vaccination and female child education in the region. The Gambia has also become a beacon of religious tolerance in Africa. Despite being home to numerous cultures, languages and reli-

**Right:** Kunta Kinteh’s hometown of Juffureh features this monument to the end of slavery.

**Below:** Mission members take a river safari in Makasutu Culture Forest.

*Photos by  
U.S. Embassy Banjul*



gions, The Gambia is a nation that respects their differences, and intermarriage is not uncommon. Nor is it uncommon to see Muslims and Christians celebrating each other’s religious holidays and blessing themselves with both religions’ prayers.

The Gambia and the United States enjoy a cordial relationship, which was strengthened with the establishment of the first-ever American Chamber of Commerce in The Gambia in 2010. The chamber’s role in creating international trade opportunities and platforms for private sector investments will ultimately diversify the economy and improve the quality of life.





**Top:** A sprinkling of native costumes adds color to this group photo of the mission's staff. **Left:** Boats line the beach at a fishing village in Banjul. **Above:** A troubadour-historian known as a griot plays the kora, a popular musical instrument in The Gambia.

*Photos by U.S. Embassy Banjul*



In partnership with the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), The Gambia hosted, for the first time, the largest communications interoperability exercise on the African continent, Africa Endeavour (AE) in July 2011. The annual event focuses on technical and human interoperability and information sharing among African militaries. AE 2011 included



**Left:** A nature forest walk features an up-close encounter with baboons.  
**Below:** Community Liaison Officer Lovette Singleton and the chancery soccer team celebrate a victory over the General Services Office warehouse team.  
**Below right:** Ruins of old administrative buildings evoke the past of Kunta Kinteh Island.

*Photos by  
 U.S. Embassy Banjul*

representatives from more than 30 African nations, North America, Europe and five international organizations. Gambian Vice President Isatou Njie-Saidy, along with AFRICOM generals and former U.S. Ambassador to The Gambia Pamela Ann White, inspected the troops at the closing ceremony.

The U.S. Embassy in Banjul is a small but energetic and engaged post, with approximately 12 Americans and 73 local employees. There is a wonderful camaraderie between the American and Locally Employed (LE) Staff. Many Americans get invited to a meal or two at the residence of one of the hardworking LE Staff before their tour of duty ends.

Public diplomacy is at the forefront of the mission's goals, with two American Corners and programs that range from reading lessons for children and adults, where mission members volunteer as tutors, to the CC Club program, which helps prepare high school graduates for international exams like the SAT and TOEFL. In return, participants are encouraged to teach computer literacy and other subjects to students from other schools.

The Free Hip Hop Concert in July 2012 was a collaboration of the embassy and one of The Gambia's telecommunications giants. U.S. artist Epiphany and a number of local musicians pulled in a crowd of more than 15,000 for a night of music.

The Peace Corps has maintained a significant presence in the country for 50 years. Currently, 81 volunteers serve in 51 villages across The Gambia, engaging in developmental projects in agricul-





ture, education and health.

Housing at post consists of decent-sized houses behind gated fences. Most have swimming pools and small yards. The Department of State–assisted Banjul American Embassy School is the preferred school for most families.

The lack of popular fast-food chains, shopping malls and movie theaters might pose a challenge to employees used to such amenities. However, other activities keep staff busy on the weekends. The Fajara Club offers golf, tennis, badminton, squash and weight facilities for an annual or monthly membership fee. The chief of mission's residence has a pool, basketball court and tennis court that are open to the embassy community. And there are many good restaurants that reflect the ethnic diversity of tourists and residents.

Traveling outside the country can be pricey, so road trips to many of The Gambia's beautiful up-country lodges and nature reserves are popular, as are jaunts to nearby destinations like Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

Even a quick trip to Banjul would prove to anyone that the "smiling coast of Africa" means more than just a shape on a map. ■



## At a Glance

## Republic of The Gambia

**Capital:** Banjul

**Government type:** Republic

**Area:** 11,295 sq. km.

**Comparative area:** Almost twice the size of Delaware

**Population:** 1.8 million

**Languages:** English (official), Mandinka, Wolof, Fula and other indigenous

**Religions:** Islam, Christian and indigenous

**GDP–per capita:** \$2,000

**Export partners:** Kenya, Indonesia, United Kingdom and India

**Export commodities:** Lint, cotton, peanut products and fish

**Import partners:** United Kingdom, The Netherlands and Hong Kong

**Import commodities:** Food, manufactured goods and fuel

**Currency:** Dalasis (GMD)

**Internet country code:** .gm

*Source: Country Background Notes*





# Meeting Haitian Needs

Industrial park promotes economic development

By Garry Pierrot,  
economics officer, Office of  
the Haiti Special Coordinator

Early in her term, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton identified Haiti as a foreign policy priority and decided the State Department must focus on how it could tangibly help improve the lives of Haitians. Department efforts emphasized putting the Haitian government and its citizens in the lead and investing in Haiti's future.

Post-2010 earthquake, the Department focused on partnering with Haitians and others on Haitian government priorities: infrastructure and energy, food and economic security, health and other basic services, governance and rule of law. Haitians particularly wanted to develop centers of economic opportunity outside Port-au-Prince.

In response, Mission Haiti focused on a plan for the Northern Corridor that brought together a range of stakeholders, including private sector companies, nongovernmental and multilateral organizations and other bilateral actors. The new Caracol Industrial Park, which began production in July and officially opens this month with several events in Caracol, results from a public-private partnership spearheaded by the government of Haiti and involving the U.S. government, Inter-American Development Bank and private firms including the South Korean textile group Sae-A and the Haitian company Peintures Caraïbe. It will employ up to 20,000 workers by 2017

and as many as 65,000 at full capacity.

For the past year, the United States has worked with local partners to ensure that residents learn about the opportunities and investments taking place in the region near the park. Information kiosks let residents know where they can learn more and apply for jobs. Town hall meetings have led to a deeper discussion of issues related to such a large investment.

The park has sparked foreign and Haitian private investment in the Northern Corridor. Working through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States has invested in a power plant constructed by ESD Engeneria and in distribution lines to be installed by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. These investments will provide electricity for the park and surrounding communities, which lacked a reliable energy source.

Mission Haiti also helped establish garment training centers to prepare Haitians for jobs in the apparel industry, which is seeing a resurgence. As of August, more than 200 local residents had graduated from the training program.



**Clockwise from above:** Cheryl Mills, counselor and chief of staff to Secretary of State Clinton, tours a USAID-funded power plant at Caracol Industrial Park in April; Construction workers carry building materials through one of Caracol Industrial Park's massive buildings in April; Former U.S. President Bill Clinton shovels concrete for the foundation at the Caracol Industrial Park in November, 2011.

*Photos by Kendra Helmer*

The industrial park is not the only area where the mission is investing in economic growth. Since more than 60 percent of Haitians derive income from farming, USAID has provided more than 9,700 farmers with improved seeds, fertilizers and technologies. This has resulted in increased yields of 118 percent for rice, 368 percent for corn, 85 percent for beans and 21 percent for plantains. The mission is committed to doubling the incomes of 100,000 rural households in the targeted regions.

To strengthen health referral networks and develop key public health capacities at the government's central and departmental levels, Mission Haiti supports improved delivery of services by government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the areas of maternal health, child health (including diarrheal





disease prevention and treatment), family planning and nutrition, HIV/AIDS services, tuberculosis diagnosis and treatment, and prevention and treatment of tropical diseases such as lymphatic filariasis.

In housing, the mission is working with NGOs and multilateral partners to facilitate construction of up to 7,300 homes that have access to water, sanitation and electrical services. The first 900 houses are nearing completion. Other infrastructure improvements, such as installing solar lighting on the highway between Limonade and Ouanaminthe and in Cap-Haïtien, are helping northern Haiti's economy grow and providing citizen access to basic services.

By supporting a Haitian-led development effort based on the priorities of the Haitian government and people, Mission Haiti is making genuine progress. U.S. investments in northern Haiti are a tangible demonstration of the U.S. long-term commitment.

During a visit to Caracol Industrial Park in July, Haitian Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe said, "Haiti is open for business." He called the park "a model of development that we would like to replicate."

*Contributors to this article included John Robinson, economic section chief, Embassy Port-au-Prince; Amy Shatsoff, USAID information officer; intern Herve Leonard; and Caitlin Klevorick and Jean-Louis Warnholz, Office of the Counselor.* ■



# ROCKING THE MISSION



## Kabul staffers beat stress with jam sessions

Story by Jared Banks, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs transition coordinator and Justice Sector program officer, U.S. Embassy Kabul • Photos by Kabul Public Affairs Section

Working at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul can be stressful, and one way the embassy community copes with the demanding work is through listening to live music performed by bands composed of Mission Afghanistan staff.

In 2011 and 2012, a number of musicians at post banded together to share their talents, and the embassy, supported by the community liaison office (CLO) and Kabul Embassy Employee Association (KEEA), purchased necessary equipment. As a result, on most weekends at least one group performs at the embassy or in other locations in Kabul.

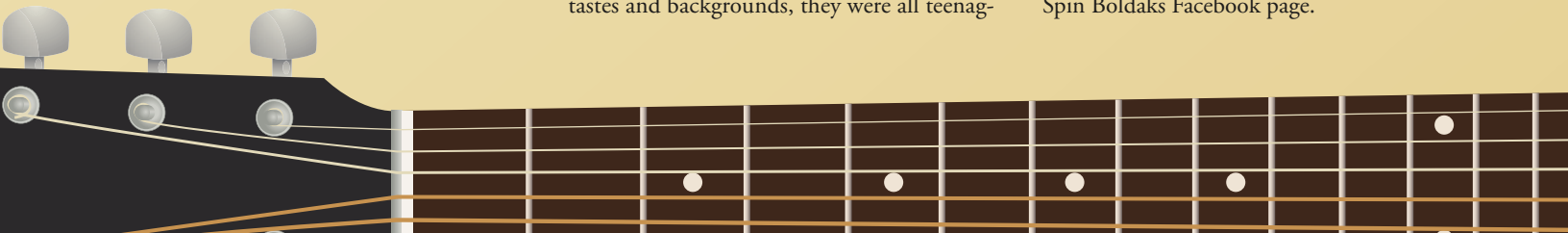
One group is the Mission Essential Jazz Band. The band, which has been playing live jazz in Kabul since February, was formed by Management Assistant Lloyd Cooper and Executive Staffer Kris Kvols. Mission Essential has performed at numerous events, including the embassy's Black History Month

celebrations, National Jazz Month Appreciation celebrations, Spring Fling Ball, July 4th celebrations and many CLO events. It has also performed at other embassies, including those of the United Kingdom and Russia. The group plays jazz standards by Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley and others, as well as rhythm-and-blues classics. The band features Shon Belcher and Gene Lin on guitar; Rudi Berrien on bass; Javier Castano, Kris Kvols or Chris Stroup on drums; Nick Katsakis on saxophone; and Mike Hall on piano and vocals.

The Spin Boldaks is another band at post, which arose when three Office of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) staffers, David Jendrisak, Matt Miller and Jared Banks, started playing guitar together soon after their arrival in August 2011. Although they had different musical tastes and backgrounds, they were all teenag-

ers in the 1980s and sought to create new compositions of popular 1980s pop music using only acoustic guitars. Their shows have included renditions of dance classics, such as Madonna's "Holiday" and Dead or Alive's "You Spin Me Round (Like a Record)" as well as classics from the alternative songbook, such as The Pixies' "Here Comes Your Man" and Peter Murphy's "Cuts You Up." As their tours came to an end, they also added The Clash's "Should I Stay or Should I Go" to their repertoire.

Spin Boldaks has performed several times at the embassy and at INL-supported Camp Gibson in Kabul. A highlight was performing at Ambassador Ryan Crocker's farewell gathering. Although the band's members departed Kabul in July, each to a different part of the world, some photos of their performances (including zany costumes) remain on their Spin Boldaks Facebook page.



Today, the band currently at the heart of the embassy's rock music scene is the Baksheesh Boys, fronted by Gene Lin, a USAID engineer. The band started in October 2010 but has since gone through four iterations as members transitioned in and out of Kabul. In addition to Lin, the band's original members include Jim Bivens (vocals), Clyde Skimmerhorn (vocals and acoustic guitar), Fraser Moffat (bass) and Jose Perez (drums).

Originally a southern rock band, the Baksheesh Boys quickly added classic rock tunes to its set list. Its main venue was the post's old Duck and Cover Bar and the infamous "Red Tent," but it has expanded its

range to include the Camp Eggers "Clamshell" and the International Security Assistance Force's "Club 37." Later incarnations of the band included Leatrice Carter, Chris Meade and Mike Porter on vocals; Scott Brown and Rudi Berrien on bass; Bruce Byers on harmonica; and Javier Castano, Kris Kvols or Jonathan Terra on drums.

Beyond its home-grown musicians, the post also supports the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM), underscoring the U.S.-Afghan partnership and the U.S. commitment to Afghanistan's cultural arts renewal. ANIM performers often play at official events. For instance, an ANIM women's string quartet performed at a special

Women's History Month event honoring the embassy's female staff. At the post's 4th of July celebration, students in ANIM's traditional Afghan music ensemble performed both the U.S. and Afghanistan national anthems.

The only music school in Afghanistan, ANIM is one of Afghanistan's key educational institutions for reviving its cultural and musical heritage. The embassy supports ANIM's efforts to provide music education to Afghan children and youths with grants for intensive music-education programs that train students on traditional Afghan and classical Western musical instruments.

Many Afghans are also turning to rock and roll as an expression of their freedoms and to encourage change in Afghanistan. Afghan rock bands Kabul Dreams and The White Page have played at post, including a roaring set of contemporary rock and heavy metal at the "Red Tent."

Toward the end of each evening when Afghan rockers perform, members of the Baksheesh Boys and local expat musicians who mentor the Afghan musicians join the Afghans on stage for extended improvisational jam sessions. As this sampling of a year of musical groups and live performances at Embassy Kabul indicates, music in Kabul regularly brings together the embassy staff and their Afghan friends. ■



**Above:** Members of the Afghanistan National Institute of Music perform at an event for International Women's Day. **Left:** Gene Lin, left, and Nick Katsakis perform jazz as part of Mission Essential.

**Opposite page:** Chris Meade of the Baksheesh Boys sings at a concert.



# ELOs Pitch in to Make Rio+20 Succeed



From June 20-22, the Government of Brazil hosted one of the largest UN conferences ever, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio+20, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The conference was preceded by more than a week of multilateral negotiations in Rio, resulting in a nine-day multilateral event attended by nearly 100 heads of state or government and some 500 ministers or cabinet members.

As such, Rio+20 was one of the largest gatherings of the world's political leadership in recent times. In addition to the 45,763 attendees with official conference identification who attended the negotiations and events in the formal conference venue, thousands more, including business leaders, civil society representatives and youth participated in hundreds

of official and unofficial events throughout Rio de Janeiro.

The U.S. delegation, led by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, consisted of more than 75 persons drawn from several agencies, including negotiators, assistant secretaries, special representatives and cabinet members. Most of the U.S. delegation was on the ground in Rio for nearly two weeks.

The conference focused on securing an international agreement on ways to shape a sustainable future. As Secretary Clinton said at the Rio+20 plenary session, sustainable development is "one of the most pressing matters of our time, because how we grow together over the long term isn't a question for only some countries. It is a question for all countries."

Ultimately, world leaders succeeded in adopting, by consensus, an outcome document which advanced action on sustainable development. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, "Rio+20 has given us a solid platform to build on" with regard to global sustainable development action.

More than a year before the June 2012 conference, Ambassador Shannon offered and promoted full Mission Brazil support to the U.S. delegation to the gathering. Accordingly, Consulate General Rio and Embassy Brasilia worked closely together in the long preparations run-up to Rio+20 to ensure that we provided comprehensive administrative and substantive support to the U.S. delegation.

In practical terms, a visit by the Secretary alone is a tremendous undertaking for any



A nighttime photo shows the exterior of the U.S. Center, which showcased U.S. efforts on sustainable development worldwide.

*Photo by John Elliott*

post; simultaneously supporting U.S. participation in a conference of this magnitude required the deployment of the entire Rio Consulate General staff as well as considerable substantive and administrative support from colleagues throughout Mission Brazil and even beyond. In a unique part of this exercise, the consulate leadership decided to maximize the use of Rio+20 as a professional development opportunity for Rio's entry-level officers to learn about control officer responsibilities for a large visit and to experience a multilateral diplomacy event.

To accomplish this, TDY consular officers from across the Mission backfilled the visa line so that the ELOs were free to take on these control officer and administrative support roles.

Although the official conference venue was a large conference center in Barra de Tijuca, a suburb of Rio about 25 miles from the center of the city, there were hundreds of official and unofficial side events associated with the conference scattered throughout the metropolitan area. The large number of official U.S. delegation visitors, the wide range of their official activities and the geographic spread of locations for these activities, as well as the length of their stay, required that control officers work long hours, be self-sufficient, and make decisions on the spot to meet the needs of their principals. As a result, they became de facto staff assistants, security officers, press aides, tour guides, interpreters, logistics managers and local city experts. They also gained the opportunity to work so closely with high-level visitors and multilateral negotiators, and were present and involved in activities behind the scenes.

Rio+20 provided public diplomacy-coned entry-level officers with another unique experience: supporting the outreach efforts that ran alongside the official negotiations. In coordination with the U.S. delegation's press office, the entry-level officers monitored the daily press, helped draft releases, coordinated requests for interviews, produced photographic images and coordinated press engagements and briefings with the negotiating team members. At the UN-Brazil exhibition park across the street from the official conference venue, there were exhibits on sustainable development by 57 countries and 33 international organizations, including a U.S. Center. The entry-level officers supported the numerous U.S. high-level presenters at the U.S. Center, including the Environmental Protection Agency administrator and the deputy administrator of USAID, and the U.S. Center's public programming.

The U.S. Center organized more than 40 presentations and activities, highlighting the initiatives and activities of the United States government and international partners, as well as civil society and private sector partners. Visitors from around the world visited the center, in person and virtually, including more than 70,000 "views" of the presentations via Internet streaming.

About two weeks before the conference, the entry-level officers learned Secretary of State Clinton would lead the delegation. A week later, the line officer and line assistant were on the ground and two entry-level officers were tapped to serve as site officer and S/ES liaison, respectively. The liaison worked alongside the line officer, helping to coordinate all the details of the visit and serving as a resource for information about mission contacts, local language and the city.

Because of the number of heads of state and government at the conference, strict limitations had been placed on everything, including the size of motorcades, screening procedures at the conference venue, access to the military side of the airport and even the availability of



**Above:** EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson introduces Chief Negotiator Todd Stern at the Climate and Clean Air Coalition launch at Rio+20. *Photo by Carlos Kùlps* **Below:** Consular Officers, from left, Jennifer Empie and Tanya Salseth meet Secretary Clinton and Consulate Rio de Janeiro Visa Chief Brendan Mullarkey at the sidelines of a meet-and-greet session with consulate employees at Rio+20. *Photo by Lucia David*



space for bilateral meetings at the conference venue. Navigating these regulations, which changed daily, was possible largely due to the strong relationships of the mission staff with Brazilian government officials and UN officials and staff.

For example, the site officer assigned to manage the Secretary's bilateral meeting space at first thought she had a relatively straightforward job, until she discovered only hours before the Secretary's arrival that the space we had been promised was no longer available. Through nimble negotiation with UN Protocol, a new, and even better, space was procured and set up in the correct format for the Secretary's bilateral meetings. Even for the third-most-visited post in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs' region, Rio+20 was a truly unique VIP visit experience for everyone involved.

As Rio will host the 2014 World Cup games and the 2016 Olympics, those involved with the Rio+20 conference gained a timely lesson in coordinating mega-events. For entry-level officers, it was a chance participate in a large multilateral event and test their control officer abilities in a high pressure situation. ■

*Editor's Note: This article was authored by several of the entry-level officers participating in the conference.*



# Multilateral Coordinators

## Office brings together U.S., East Asian nations

By Linnea Duvall, presidential management fellow,  
Office of Multilateral Affairs, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Much of the history of the 21st century is being written in the Asia-Pacific, where economic development has lifted millions out of poverty, but an institutional architecture is only now developing to encourage cooperation and ensure peace and stability. To provide American leadership in building such a framework is the mission of the new Office of Multilateral Affairs (MLA) in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP). Created in 2011 in part to support the U.S. pivot to the Asia-Pacific, MLA develops, coordinates and leads U.S. strategy in shaping the region's multilateral institutions to advance U.S. interests.

"The United States has been an important partner to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other multilateral organizations in the Asia-Pacific over 35 years, but the creation of MLA is part of our effort over the past three years to institutionalize this engagement in the State Department," explained EAP Assistant Secretary Kurt Campbell. "We want ensure that our support for multilateral organizations is consistent and closely tied to

the work of the bilateral desks so that all of these efforts reinforce each other."

Since 2010, the United States has engaged in several firsts in the region, including becoming the first ASEAN Dialogue Partner to open a Mission to ASEAN. Then, just over a year ago, President Obama became the first U.S. President to attend the East Asia Sum-

mit. According to MLA Office Director Chris Castro, "the summit is the region's premier forum for discussing political and strategic issues. The President's decision to participate reflected our support for the East Asia Summit as well as the hard work MLA has put into deepening our engagement with many other institutions like ASEAN and the East Asia



Gathered in MLA's office are staff members, from left, Aaron Tarver, Michael Kachel, Jocelyn Roberts and Suraj Mungara.

*Photo by Ed Warner*



Meeting in July in Cambodia at the U.S.-ASEAN Business Conference are, from left, MLA External Affairs Officer Suraj Mungara, EAP Assistant Secretary Kurt Campbell, MLA Deputy Director Brian Andrews, Secretary of State Clinton, MLA Office Director Chris Castro, MLA Australian Exchange Diplomat Kate Longhurst and EAP Deputy Assistant Secretary Nirav Patel.

*State Department photo*

Summit,” Castro said.

The summit, a gathering of 18 heads of state, pursues comprehensive solutions to the region’s greatest challenges, including non-proliferation, disaster response and maritime security (the region is home to some of the world’s busiest ports).

“The challenges in the maritime space are incredibly complex and require close coordination between many parties with different and, at times, competing interests,” said Brian Andrews, the office’s deputy director. “Our objective is to advance a principles-based position that emphasizes finding shared interests, building habits of cooperation and ad-

vancing diplomatic approaches to disputes.”

MLA supports the U.S. Mission to ASEAN and develops programs to support ASEAN’s own efforts, including by working with the private sector. Ben Parisi, a Foreign Service officer who coordinates the U.S.-ASEAN Eminent Persons Group meeting, said the group brings together prominent business and government leaders to develop innovations that strengthen the U.S.-ASEAN relationship and drive development. U.S. members include Coca-Cola CEO Muktar Kent, former U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and former State Department Ambassador J. Stapleton Roy.

“This type of outreach to private-sector partners allows us to leverage their expertise and relationships to energize our own efforts,” Parisi said.

MLA also focuses on diplomacy, economics and people-to-people ties. For instance, the office has leveraged multilateral institutions to support regional development and integration. Through initiatives like the U.S.-Brunei English Language Partnership,

MLA equips young people with needed skills, resources and networks, and empowers them to be agents of change. This year, MLA rolled out a pilot ASEAN Fulbright Program while Secretary of State Clinton was at the ASEAN Regional Forum.

“The engagement from these exchanges, focused exclusively on regional issues, will be an important driver for ASEAN connectivity in the future,” said ASEAN Affairs Officer Aaron Tarver.

To build the right package of deliverables for senior-level engagements, MLA often develops initiatives around a particular organization’s mission and objectives. Jocelyn Roberts, MLA’s incoming Coordinator for the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI), said that while the initiative supports the sustainable development of water and related resources in one of the world’s most environmentally vulnerable regions, it is about more than conservation.

“We encourage member states to assume leadership on the transnational concerns of most interest to them,” and “help create opportunities for cooperation among local



## Office of the Month

communities by encouraging people-to-people ties,” she said.

Suraj Mungara, who helped to organize the LMI ministerial meetings in July, said subregional programs like LMI support MLA’s larger mission of connecting ASEAN members and helping them build a more prosperous and equitable future.

“This year we invited Burma to join LMI,” Suraj said, pointing to several black-and-white photos of Burmese schoolchildren. “These kinds of programs help close the development gap in ASEAN. When the poorest members of ASEAN cooperate on education, governance and the sustainable management of natural resources, ASEAN as an organization is better able to confront challenges elsewhere in the region.”

through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), a 27-member body focused on strengthening regional security relationships and confidence building. Throughout the year, non-ASEAN ARF members such as the United States and Japan partner with ASEAN members to co-host regional workshops and meetings on security issues; the latest round culminated in Secretary Clinton’s participation in the ARF Ministerial meeting.

Lt. Cmdr. Constantine Panayiotou, who leads ARF engagement for MLA, recently led preparations for a maritime security meeting that the United States co-hosted with the Republic of Korea and Indonesia in San Francisco in June. Regional government policy makers



**Right:** The office of MLA Deputy Director Brian Andrews features a large map of the Asia-Pacific region and South China Sea disputes. **Above:** Lt. Col. Tuan T. Ton served the office as senior military advisor, one of two military officers assigned there.

*Photos by Ed Warner*



MLA reaches out to international partners, including the European Union, India and Canada, to speak up about international norms of behavior and build regional capacity on shared threats. The office also coordinates closely with regional allies and partners. Michael Kachel, one of two foreign military officers stationed in MLA, does international outreach to build support for shared interests. The two officers are critical members of the team, because MLA leads military relations and force-posture planning for EAP in cooperation with the Bureau of Political Military Affairs.

EAP Senior Military Advisor Lt. Cmdr. Tuan T. Ton said this portfolio enhances MLA’s efforts at regional institution building “because it deals with how strong alliances and partnerships, especially our military-to-military cooperation around the Asia-Pacific, save lives, build trust and advance our interests.”

The United States’ enduring alliances with Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, the Philippines and Thailand play important roles in MLA’s efforts to improve security cooperation. MLA leverages these partnerships while reaching out to emerging regional powers

discussed maritime issues, and for the first time officials from regional coast guards and civil maritime agencies participated.

“The meeting allowed us to share best practices and develop ideas, but more importantly, it provided a way to build trust and develop relationships that will allow us to act more quickly and efficiently together as partners in times of crisis,” Panayiotou explained.

Looking ahead, MLA is gearing up for the East Asia Summit in November.

“We’re already putting together a strong package of deliverables in maritime security, nonproliferation and humanitarian disaster response,” said MLA Deputy Assistant Secretary Nirav Patel. “This will be the most important meeting of the year in Asia, and we have a big vision for how to shape it.”

MLA Director Castro says his team is ready for the challenge. “The staff in MLA is incredibly hard working and dedicated,” he said. “We’ll be putting in a lot of hours between now and November, but I know we will put together a package that will advance the priorities of the President and support our friends and partners in the Asia-Pacific.” ■



# LYING IN STATE: WHAT I DID WITH MY SUMMER

REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICER MILLICENT GROSS-KORN: "WE WENT BACK TO THE STATES AND SPENT THREE DAYS WITH MY PARENTS, TWO DAYS WITH BART'S SISTER STARLA, A DAY WITH MY GRAMMA MONA, TWO DAYS WITH MY STEP-UNCLE LUCIUS, AND THEN MY COUSIN SHARLATA IN..."



MANAGEMENT OFFICER SPIRO WEEKS: "I WENT TO WASHINGTON FOR MANDATORY MID-LEVEL VENTRILLOQUISM TRAINING."



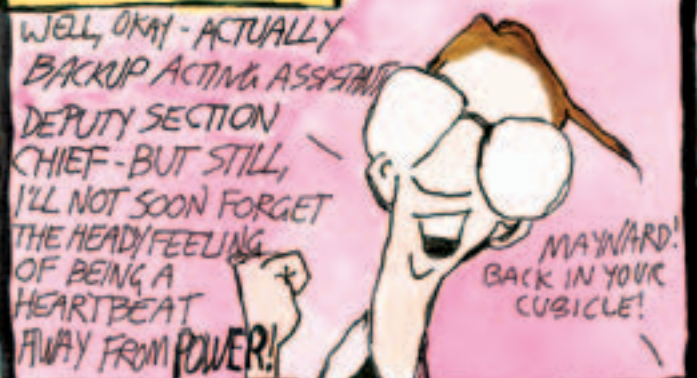
DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION MARVELLA NEZGODNA: "I TRAINED SEVERAL OF MY CATS TO WRITE MY INITIALS ON MEMOS NEEDING MY CLEARANCE."



VICE CONSUL ELIHU BLANDING: "I WAS TRANSFERRED FROM PLAIDOVIA TO POLKADOTISTAN."



ECONOMIC OFFICER MAYNARD BASKING: "WHILE EVERYONE ELSE WENT ON VACATION, I WAS THE ACTING ASSISTANT DEPUTY SECTION CHIEF!"





# Appointments



**Jeffrey D. Levine**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Estonia



**John M. Koenig**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Cyprus



**Mari Carmen Aponte**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
El Salvador



**Mari Carmen Aponte** of the District of Columbia has been confirmed as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of El Salvador, where she had been serving on a recess appointment. Previously, she was an attorney and consultant with Aponte Consulting, and served on the Oriental Financial Group board of directors. Earlier, she was executive director of the Puerto Rican Federal Affairs Administration. Prior to that, she practiced law in Washington, D.C., for 20 years.

**Susan Marsh Elliott** (SFS) of Florida is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan. Previously, she was a deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs. She has served in Moscow (twice), Belfast, Athens and Lima. She was deputy executive secretary for former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and director of the Executive Secretariat Staff. She is married to Foreign Service Officer Matthias Mitman. They have two sons.

**Douglas M. Griffiths** (SFS) of Texas is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. Previously, he was deputy permanent representative to the U.S. Mission to the U.N. in Geneva. Before that, he was principal officer in Guayaquil. He was deputy chief of mission and chargé d'affaires in Port-au-Prince and also served in Quebec City, Lisbon, Maputo and Rabat. He is married and has two children.

**John M. Koenig** (SFS) of Washington is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus. Previously, he was political advisor to the commander of the Allied Joint Force Command in Naples. Before that, he was chargé d'affaires and deputy chief of mission in Berlin. He was also DCM at the U.S. Mission to NATO and principal officer in Thessaloniki, Greece. Other postings include Athens, Nicosia, Jakarta and Manila.

**Jeffrey D. Levine** (SFS) of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia. Previously, he was director of the Office of

Recruitment, Examination and Employment. Before that, he was deputy chief of mission/chargé d'affaires in Budapest. Other postings include Sofia, Brasilia, Nicosia, Alexandria, Kuala Lumpur and Lima. Before joining the Department, he was a newspaper reporter and founding staff member of *USA Today*.

**Richard L. Morningstar** of Massachusetts is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan. Previously, he was the Secretary of State's special envoy for Eurasian Energy. Prior to that, he lectured at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and at Stanford Law School. Earlier, he was U.S. Ambassador to the European Union. He has also been chairman of the board and CEO of Costar Corporation and an attorney. He is married and has four children.

**Dorothea-Maria Rosen** (SFS) of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia. Previously, she was

diplomat-in-residence for the Midwest region, based at the University of Illinois. Before that, she was deputy principal officer in Frankfurt. Other postings include Bern, Reykjavik, Manila, Berlin, Accra, Seoul, Stuttgart and Bucharest. Before joining the Department, she served in the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps in Germany.

**Michele Jeanne Sison** (SFS) of Maryland is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives. Previously, she was assistant chief of mission in Baghdad, and before that U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates. Other assignments include director of the Office of Career Development and Assignments, principal deputy assistant secretary for South Asian Affairs and postings to Pakistan, India, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo and Haiti. She has two daughters.



**Richard L. Morningstar**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Azerbaijan



**Susan Marsh Elliott**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Tajikistan



**Michele Jeanne Sison**  
U.S. Ambassador to Sri  
Lanka and the Maldives



**Dorothea-Maria Rosen**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
the Federated States of  
Micronesia



**Douglas M. Griffiths**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Mozambique



## Retirements

### Foreign Service

Baca, Raymond R.  
Balian, John Ohannes Sarkis  
Freund, James F.  
Garcia, Marc A.  
Gershman, Glen A.  
Herbert, David  
Howard, Edward Bruce  
Hughes Jr., Lawrence Robert

MacNeil, Neil J.  
Masterson, Maryanne T.  
Olivarez, Chu L.  
Pierce, Roger Dwayne  
Richardson, Kevin  
Roginski, Donna J.  
Stanton, William A.  
Swart, Susan H.

### Civil Service

Bush, Mary Joe  
Dowlathahi, Mehrangiz  
Ensign, David Thomas  
Fenner, Louise  
Frank, Yunkyong H.  
Hosey, Steven D.  
Kaurin, Carleen G.  
Krupnikova, Anna V.  
Lee, Sharon Lenora

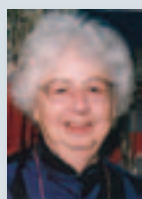
Liebowitz, Alexander T.  
Morgan, Merle V.  
Peay, Thomas Michael  
Schuhart, Anna M.  
Taylor, Lydia G.  
Thompson, John D.  
Thompson, Thomas N.  
Wood, Richard O.



# Obituaries



**Dwight Ambach**, 81, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 12 at his home in Mathews County, Va. His postings included Germany, Chile and Austria. After retiring to Mathews County, he took up the viola and played in musical productions and regional orchestras. A master gardener, he often tended public green spaces. He was interested in local history and active in many community organizations.



**Leona M. Anderson**, 91, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 8 from complications related to Alzheimer's disease. She lived in Glen Carbon, Ill. She joined the Department in 1960 and was posted to Turkey, Africa, Pakistan and Japan. After retiring in 1980, she worked for the Department as a consultant until 1993. She enjoyed traveling and spending time with family and friends.



**Harry G. Barnes Jr.**, 86, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Aug. 9 in Lebanon, N.H. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Department in 1950. He was ambassador to Chile, India and Romania, and director general of the Foreign Service. He was deputy chief of mission in Bucharest and Kathmandu and also served in Moscow, Bombay and Prague. After retiring in 1988, he was director of the Conflict Resolution and Human Rights programs at the Carter Center and chairman of the Romanian-American Enterprise Fund. He was an avid hiker in New Hampshire's White Mountains.



**Michael Philip Boerner**, 76, a retired Foreign Service officer, died April 24 of gastric cancer at his home in Bethesda, Md. He joined the Department in 1957 and served in Dusseldorf, Asuncion, La Paz, Bonn and London. After retiring in 1986, he worked for the National Planning Association on the British-North American Committee. He enjoyed hiking and biking (he advocated for Washington, D.C.'s Capital Crescent Trail), travel, genealogy and taking courses at American University.



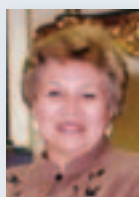
**Lee Coldren**, 69, a retired Foreign Service officer, died July 29 of cancer in Sacramento, Calif. A Rhodes Scholar, he joined the Foreign Service in 1970 and served in Lima, Kabul, New Delhi, Surabaya and Dhaka, where he was deputy chief of mission. He retired in 1997 and moved to Sacramento where he continued an involvement in international affairs. He participated in U.N.-sponsored Afghanistan meetings and appeared on local radio and TV stations explaining Afghan issues.



**Richard M. Key**, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 27 after a long illness in Pompano Beach, Fla. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Department in 1956. His postings included Panama, Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina and Poland. After retiring, he enjoyed travel, family life, photography and writing espionage novels, essays and travel articles.



**Daniel J. Mackell Sr.**, 85, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Aug. 22 in Rockville, Md. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Foreign Service in 1969 as an economic and development loan officer. His postings included Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Egypt and Jamaica. He also traveled extensively throughout the Middle East, Latin America, Europe and Asia.



**Elena M. Milburn**, 75, wife of retired Foreign Service officer Edward Milburn, died Feb. 13 of pulmonary fibrosis at her home in Talty, Texas. She accompanied her husband on assignments to Venezuela, where she taught English and Spanish; Chile (twice); Colombia (twice); Spain; Mexico; Bolivia; Italy (twice); and Guyana, where she was community liaison office coordinator and taught Spanish. They retired to El Paso, Texas, where she enjoyed oil painting and attending adult education courses. Later, they relocated to the Dallas area.



**Robert M. Miller**, 87, a retired Foreign Service officer, died March 3 in Santa Monica, Calif. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. His postings included Austria, Guatemala, Chile and Yugoslavia. He was executive secretary of the Executive Secretariat under two secretaries of state. After retiring in 1983 with 35 years of service, he was the Director General's Representative to Israel for the Multinational Force and Observers. He enjoyed international travel and cruising.



**Avery Patterson**, 56, a retired Civil Service employee, died Aug. 22 after a long illness. She lived in Suitland, Md. She joined the Department in 1976. Toward the end of her 35-year career, she was an IT specialist in the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration. She enjoyed shopping, dancing, traveling and cruising to such places as Alaska, Hawaii, Bermuda, Mexico, the Caribbean, California and Texas. She was active in her church.



**Charles E. Pedonti**, 85, a retired Foreign Service officer, died March 1. He served in the Army during World War II and received a Purple Heart. He joined the Foreign Service in 1947 and was posted to Paris, Jerusalem, Istanbul, Tunis, Cotonou, Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Vienna and Santo Domingo. After retiring in 1980, he worked for Mobil Oil in Cameroon and Saga Petroleum in Benin. He eventually retired to Alpharetta, Ga. He had an extensive African art collection and enjoyed traveling and photography.



**Charles R. "Chuck" Rheingans**, 71, a retired Foreign Service officer, died July 17 in Richmond, Va. He served in the Peace Corps in Thailand and joined the Foreign Service in 1964. During his 35-year career, he was posted to Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. After retiring, he sold long-term-care insurance.



**Herbert G. Wing**, 86, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Aug. 5. He lived in Dartmouth, Mass. He served in the Army during World War II and became a historian with the Army Chemical Corps until joining the Department in 1957. His postings included New Delhi, San Jose, Colombo and the U.S. Mission to the U.N. in Geneva. He retired in 1984. Among his interests were the glass and whaling museums in New Bedford, Mass., and a bird club. He was an ardent Mason.



**Douglas A. Zischke**, 83, a retired Foreign Service officer, died July 15 at his home in Leesburg, Va. He served in the Army before joining the U.S. Information Agency in 1957. He was posted to Uruguay, Bolivia, Mexico City, Tegucigalpa, Buenos Aires, Guatemala and Tehran. Following his retirement in 1980, he worked as an international consultant and foreign affairs advisor with the Department until 1998. He enjoyed tennis and was actively involved with his church, teaching English to international students and participating in foreign missions.

**Edmund L. Auchter**, 79, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 24 in Sarasota, Fla. He served in the Army during the Korean War. He joined the Foreign Service in 1962 and was posted to Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Tunisia and Senegal. After his retirement in 1986, he did contract work in Indonesia, Zaire, Guinea-Bissau and Bangladesh. He was a fan of local opera companies and symphony orchestras and enjoyed golf and Washington, D.C., museums.

**Lois Marilyn Gibson**, 80, a retired Foreign Service officer, died July 8. She joined the Foreign Service in 1968 and served in Vietnam, Zaire, Burundi, Botswana, South Africa and Laos. After retiring in 1995, she lived in Florida and Washington State before moving to Pensacola, Fla. She enjoyed tennis, writing and painting.

**Lauren J. Goin**, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 30. He lived in Myrtle Beach, S.C. He served in the Navy during World War II. His postings included Jakarta, Ankara and Rio de Janeiro. After retiring in 1975, he conducted surveys with regional security officers in Khartoum, Paris, Monrovia, Rome, Manila and Tunis. He enjoyed golf, rooting for the Washington Redskins, cruising and volunteering at the hospital.

**Frances M. Prelec**, 83, a retired Foreign Service officer, died May 19 in Long Beach, Calif. Her postings included Managua, Vienna, Nairobi, Jakarta, Buenos Aires, Manila, Athens and Brasilia. After retiring in 1993, she volunteered at the Aquarium of the Pacific and the Queen Mary in Long Beach. ■



# End State



## Afghanistan

An Afghan man walks through a dust storm near the village of Omarkhel in Zabul Province. Dust storms are common in Afghanistan, where residents may endure as many as six days a month of the phenomena during the summer.

*Photo by USAF  
Staff Sgt. Manuel J. Martinez*



PG.  
28



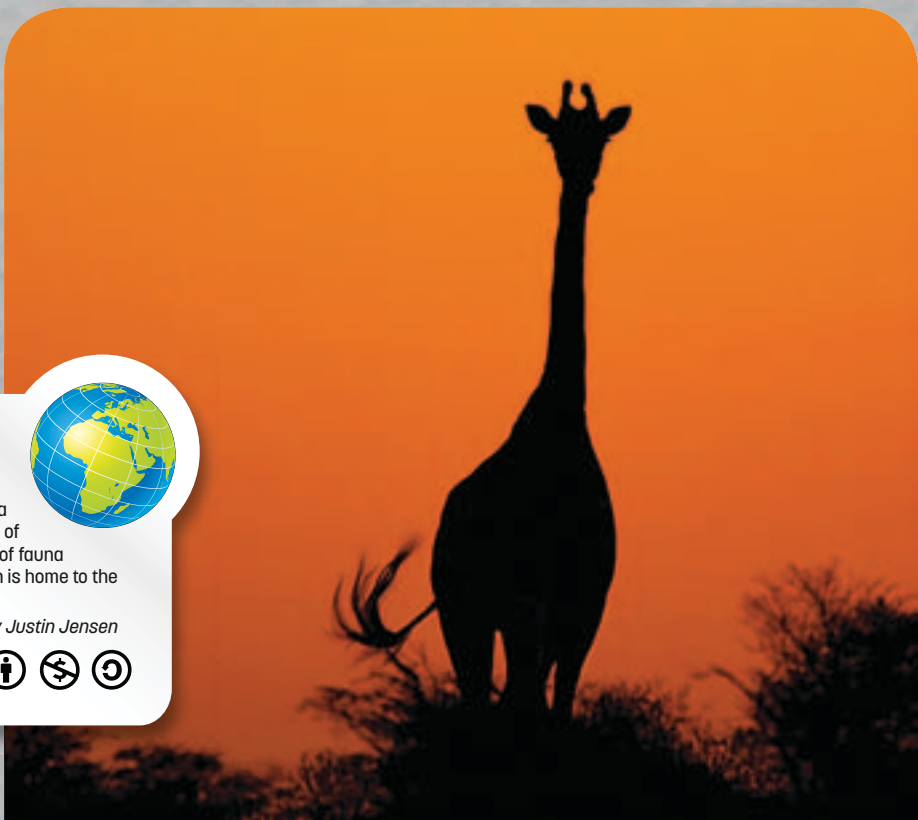
## Botswana

The fiery glow of a Kalahari sunset silhouettes a lone giraffe in the Tonunga region. The Kalahari Basin covers much of Botswana and supports a wide variety of fauna and flora. The large semi-arid savannah is home to the world's second largest game reserve.

*Photo by Justin Jensen*



PG. 11





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## Haiti

A young girl stands amid a rubble-strewn street in Jacmel, a city in Haiti's Sud-Est region. Jacmel was one of many cities devastated by the powerful 7.0 magnitude temblor that shook the region in 2010, destroying nearly 70 percent of the city's homes. Rebuilding continues to this day.

*Photo by Breezy Baldwin*

PG. 26



## Georgia

Stepantsminda, a small town 157 km (98 mi) north of Tbilisi, rises from the Caucasus Mountains along the banks of the Therji River. The town's name, "Saint Stephen" in English, pays homage to the Georgian Orthodox monk who constructed a hermitage on this site sometime before the 18th Century.

*Photo by Marco Fieber*

PG. 18







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